

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification from page 6, line 19, through page 7, line 19, as follows:

A perforated shield over the affected leaflet will be sufficient to prevent leaflet prolapse while maintaining adequate blood flow. Thus, in Fig. 4 3, a plurality of radially elongated perforations 10 are provided in mitral shield 5. Alternatively, circular perforations, such as the circular perforations 10 provided in the mitral shield 5 shown in Fig. 2 4, may also be provided. Still other perforation configurations, in both shape and number, will be apparent to those skilled in the art in view of the present disclosure.

The mitral shield may be constructed of biological material (e.g., human or bovine pericardium) or non-biological material (e.g., Dacron, PTFE, a biocompatible plastic, a biocompatible metal such as titanium, nitinol wire, etc). It may also consist of autologous cells grown on a matrix or frame. The sheet may be attached to the annulus using sutures, staples, wire, medical grade adhesives or other means of fixation. Thus, for example, in Fig. 4 3 staples 15 are shown attaching shield 5 to the annulus of the valve.